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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|--|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/717,913 | 11/21/2003 | Nobuo Ichimura | 062709-0118 | 7376 |
| 22428 | 7590 | 04/02/2007 | EXAMINER | |
| FOLEY AND LARDNER LLP | | | BOCHNA, DAVID | |
| SUITE 500 | | | ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
| 3000 K STREET NW | | | * 3679 | |
| WASHINGTON, DC 20007 | | | | |
| SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE | | MAIL DATE | DELIVERY MODE | |
| 3 MONTHS | | 04/02/2007 | PAPER | |

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. | Applicant(s) | |
| | 10/717,913 | ICHIMURA ET AL. | |
| | Examiner | Art Unit | |
| | David E. Bochna | 3679 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 March 2007.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 5-15 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) 2-4, 18 and 19 is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1, 16-17 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

1. The indicated allowability of claim 1 is withdrawn in view of the newly discovered reference(s) to Japanese Patent 06-123204. Rejections based on the newly cited reference(s) follow.
2. Claims 2-4 and 18-19 are allowed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1 and 16-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent 06-123204.

In regard to claim 1, Japanese Patent ‘204 discloses a connecting structure comprising:

a first member 1;

and a second member 5,

wherein the first member has a peripheral wall portion 3 that includes an outer end face and a stepped portion 4 engaged with the second member 5,

wherein the peripheral wall portion includes a thin-shaped deformed portion 9 that is defined by a groove 8 formed in the outer end face of the peripheral wall portion 3,

wherein the deformed portion 9 is inclined and curved inwardly toward the step portion such that an inner surface of the deformed portion is formed in a concave shape 10 and an outer surface of the deformed portion is formed in a convex shape,

wherein the deformed portion is positioned axially within (surface 10 is axially within peripheral end face 3) the outer end face of the peripheral wall portion 3, and

wherein the inner surface 10 of the deformed portion abuts the second member 5.

In regard to claim 16, Japanese Patent '204 discloses a connecting structure, comprising:

a first member 1;

and a second member 5

wherein the first member has a peripheral wall portion 3 that includes an outer end face and a stepped portion 4 engaged with the second member,

wherein the peripheral wall portion 3 includes a thin-shaped deformed portion 9 that is defined by a groove 8 formed in the outer end face and is deformed inwardly with respect to the stepped portion of the first member,

wherein the deformed portion 9 is inclined and curved inwardly toward the step portion 4 such that the outer face of the deformed portion is formed in a convex shape, and the inner face of the deformed portion abuts and is engaged with the second member 5.

In regard to claim 17, wherein the inner face 10 of the deformed portion is formed in a concave shape.

Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David E. Bochna whose telephone number is (571) 272-7078. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-5:30 Monday-Thursday and every other Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola can be reached on (571) 272-7087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



David E. Bochna
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3679